

BOCES BITS

February 2015
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Students from five districts score big in Academic Decathlon Tully takes top honors in Section III Educational Competition



On Saturday, January 24, more than 60 students from the Cazenovia, Liverpool, Tully, West Genesee and Westhill school districts competed in the 2015 New York State Section III Academic Decathlon Competition at Westhill High School. The event is coordinated annually by the Onondaga-Cortland-Madison Board of Cooperative Educational Services (OCM BOCES).

The theme of this year's event, "New Alternatives in Energy: Ingenuity and Innovation," had students battling wits in a series of written tests and an oral relay (Super Quiz) competition. Since it

began as a local academic competition in California in 1968, the event has grown to become an international event for students in grades 9-12. The Decathlon promotes well roundedness by providing competition for each team in several events, including the team-based Super Quiz oral relay and objective tests in art, math, science, music, economics, literature and social science.

Individual students earn medals by subject area, and accumulate points toward their team's total. In this year's competition, the team from Tully (pictured above) won first place for the Super Quiz competition, with a score of 2,583 and first place overall, with a score of 21,525. The team from West Genesee (pictured below right) earned 19,780 total points and took second place while the from Westhill (pictured below left) earned 19,436 points to place third overall in the competition.

These three highest scoring teams will now advance to the New York State Competition, which is taking place on February 27 and 28 at the State University of New York at Brockport. The state winner will go on to represent New York state in the national competition, scheduled for April 16 through 18 in Garden Grove, California.

Congratulations to all the student competitors for their excellent performances!



Financial Aid Fact Night at McEvoy Campus Monday, February 23, 2015 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Financial Aid representatives will present an overview of the financial aid process and will be available to assist parents and students with completing the FAFSA forms.

To ensure computer availability at the event, please RSVP by calling (607) 758-5260 or e-mailing ccolasurdo@ocmboces.org.

From the District Superintendent



Dear staff;

As we are moving into the second semester of the 2014-15 school year, I am feeling the momentum picking up here at OCM BOCES. In just a short time, we will be presenting our initial budget to districts at our 2015 Annual Meeting. Shortly thereafter, our component districts will be requesting the public's approval of their own budgets for the 2015-16 school year.

With budget season rapidly approaching, our school districts are feeling a sense of uneasiness and uncertainty. Since 2009-10, the district's financial state has suffered the consequences of the Gap Elimination Adjustment, which has resulted in the loss of **more than 280 million dollars** in aid for our 23 component districts since the 2010-11 school year.

Even though Governor Cuomo presented his 2015-16 New York State Budget Proposal in late January, very few specifics were made available as to what funding school districts can expect. Without having the details necessary, districts are challenged greatly when making budgeting decisions or projections. I anticipate that many districts will be working out their final budget decisions very close to their May 19 budget votes. I encourage you to become involved in your school district's budget process. Here at BOCES, we will use this newsletter to share information with you about our own budget.

So even though Punxsutawney Phil *did* see his shadow and predicts another six weeks of winter, I can't help feeling as though spring is just around the corner. There are so many great things happening here at BOCES...we are coming into the months of CTE competitions, award ceremonies and graduations from our many programs. We also have our March superintendent's conference day on the 20th, which coincides with the first day of spring. As always, I'm looking forward to spending that day of learning, collaboration and renewal with you all!

Sody

Students in the Spotlight!



Congratulations to OCM BOCES students Hunter Moore and Brian Stadler, who were among the hundreds of Central New York junior and senior high school artists recognized in the 2015 CNY Scholastic Art Awards. Both received "Gold Key" awards for their submissions in the annual awards program, which draws thousands of entries from talented students throughout Central New York. A third BOCES student, Cody Metzler, also entered the CNY Scholastic Art Awards and received an honorable mention. Entries are judged by professional artists, educators and photographers.

Gold Key award winners are eligible to have their work displayed in the CNY Scholastic Art Exhibit. The exhibit is open to the public through Friday, February 27, 2015 at the Whitney Applied Technology Center at Onondaga Community College (4941 Onondaga Road) in Syracuse. Exhibit hours are: Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

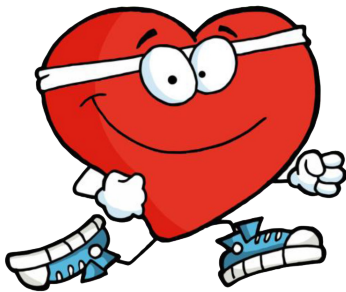


EAP News...

Your EAP is a free, voluntary, and confidential assessment/referral service for employees and their family members who are experiencing personal or work related problems such as:

- Alcohol and/or drug abuse
- Emotional problems
- Stress
- Marital and/or family conflict
- Compulsive gambling
- Financial difficulties
- Aging parents
- Grieving
- Wellness
- Other personal matters

Your February EAP Wellness Topic is Healthy Heart



Your OCM BOCES EAP has a variety of educational information about this month's wellness topic, a healthy heart. Please contact us to receive information about the following topics:

- Heart Healthy Eating
- Depression and Heart Disease
- Heart Health
- High Blood Pressure
- Smoking: It's Never Too Late to Stop

For Information Contact:

EAP

1-800-EAP-8764 or (315) 471-1361

www.eap.ocmboces.org

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Words of Wisdom

“ Never bear more than one trouble at a time. Some people bear three kinds - all they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have.

- Edward Everett Hale

School Districts Save Money by Consolidating through BOCES

As an employee of OCM BOCES, you already know that school districts have a long history of working together to provide services collaboratively through the mechanism of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services.

While BOCES were initially designed many decades ago to help small and rural schools come together to provide occupational and special education, the organization has transformed and evolved over the years to offer additional services. In addition to its many well-known cooperative educational programs, OCM BOCES also offers administrative, management, technology and non-instructional services such as cooperative purchasing, and safety and risk management.

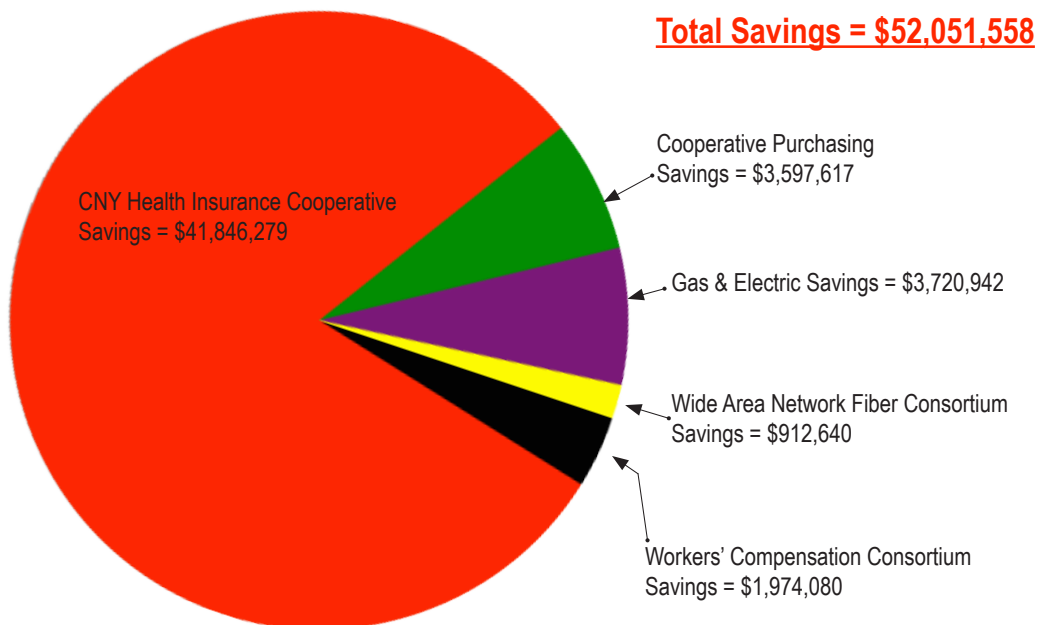
Each year, OCM BOCES saves its 23 component districts millions of dollars by coordinating their cooperative purchase of health insurance and workers' compensation coverage, natural gas, electricity, technology equipment, fuel and many other commodities. During 2014, OCM BOCES saved its 23 component districts more than \$52 million through such cooperative initiatives.

"All districts have to pay employees and vendors. They have to buy goods and services and transport students to and from their buildings. And all districts need to heat and cool those buildings," OCM BOCES District Superintendent Jody Manning stated. "But by sharing the cost of these necessities, OCM BOCES districts are saving a great deal of money and providing higher quality services. It is simply a win-win," he added.

The \$52 million saved in 2014 is made up of a combination of cooperative efforts such as cooperative purchasing, a wide area fiber network consortium, an energy cooperative, a health insurance cooperative and a workers' compensation consortium.

The OCM BOCES cooperative purchasing service allows districts to join together and pool quantities of particular commodities for competitive bidding. Cooperative purchasing provides cost savings for districts because vendors typically offer more favorable pricing to districts when commodities are being bid out in greater volume. Additionally, districts may realize savings in other areas since cooperative purchasing does not require them to devote as much of their staff's time, effort, and resources toward procuring items as if they were to do so on their own.

Savings for OCM BOCES School Districts from Selected Cooperative Efforts During 2014



Collaboration provides fun opportunity for students

On Friday, January 16, several different programs participated in an afternoon of basketball at the Alternative to Homebound gymnasium. The programs that participated were: Reach, Innovation Tech, Career Academy, Crossroads and Kasson Road.

The students were excited to attend and participate in this sporting event. With 34 students participating, there were four teams with 8 or 9 students on each team. It was exciting to see the effort, enthusiasm and teamwork throughout the afternoon!

This event was made possible through the collaborative efforts of Kasson Road Principal, Julie Darmody; physical education instructors Vinnie Smith, Bill Myers, Chuck Scheftic and Brian Petrick and Reach Program Dean of Students, Renae Montroy.

Thank you to all of the staff members that also provided support for this event to take place!



STAR students perform for holidays at Ithaca Mall concert

On December 16 and 17, OCM BOCES students in the STAR program (both the junior and senior high school) performed for an audience at Ithaca Mall. The Chimers worked hard all semester to prepare Holiday classics such as "We Wish A Merry Christmas," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," and "Joy To The World." The Mall provided the Chimers with the opportunity to perform for the community and give their gift of music for the holiday season.



LPN class donates grocery items to Snack Pack Program

Many thanks to adult education LPN program instructor, Lori Gordon, whose class at the OCM BOCES McEvoy campus recently helped some other BOCES students through a Snack Pack Program. The program serves various OCM BOCES special education program students identified as needing additional nutritional support. Programs include SED, Day Treatment, STAR, TEAM and Stellata.



Prior to holiday break, the adult education students conducted a food drive specifically to help fill backpacks for the younger students for the purpose of providing snacks and food items on weekends and breaks when they might not have healthy snack options.

Thank you and great job!

2014 Flexible Spending Claims Due by March 31

Don't forget! The 2014 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) plan year ended on December 31, 2014.

All claims for unpaid monies must be postmarked to Benefit Resource, Inc.

by March 31, 2015 for expenditures from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014.



Reach students complete book and present to younger students



With the support of the entire Reach Team and the following program instructors: Mary Losito (Math), Joe Catalano (Science) and Khrystie Allen (English), seventh grade Reach students worked together in all subject areas to complete a "How to" Measurement Book.

The students were then able to share their book and knowledge of measurement with 4th grade students at Minoa Elementary in the East Syracuse Minoa Central School District. This event occurred on Friday, January 23, 2015.

Great job to all that were involved in this project work!

Lemony Snicket visits Innovation Tech



On December 15, 2014, Innovation Tech students were paid a very special visit by author Daniel Handler, who was visiting Syracuse as the final 2014 speaker for the Rosamond Gifford Lecture Series 2014-15 season.

Daniel Handler, who writes under the pen name Lemony Snicket, achieved fame with his 13-book collection, "A Series of Unfortunate Events," which describes the adventures of the suddenly-orphaned Baudelaire siblings as they try to uncover the secrets behind their parents' deaths. His books have sold more than 65 million copies and have been translated into 43 languages. Handler has also penned several books for

adults under his own name and occasionally writes for *The New York Times*.

During his visit, Handler discussed his motivation in writing about "unfortunate events" saying he feels "That terrible things are much more interesting." Students had the opportunity to ask questions, hear the author read an excerpt from his book, were able to speak with him one on one have their copies of his books autographed.

Several students asked questions about becoming authors and finding inspiration for their own writing. Good luck to all the budding Innovation Tech authors!



Extra, Extra!! We want your news for *BOCES Bits*!

Please submit your ideas and suggestions for publication in future issues of *BOCES Bits* by e-mailing Laurie Cook at lcook@ocmboces.org.

Did you know...



Unrinsed milk cartons are recyclable?



Unrinsed juice cartons are recyclable?



Pizza boxes are recyclable?

Recycling is most effective when the recycling and trash bins are side by side?

Recycling at OCM BOCES is improving!

Please continue to make this a priority with the students and staff with whom you work.

Thank you for your efforts in the “greening” of OCM BOCES

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